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SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN IMPROVEMENT

Fact Sheet
64a

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Why are some school systems targeted for improvement?

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires school systems, as well as schools, to meet annual targets in reading and mathematics. Students are tested annually in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school by a reading test at grade 10 and an end-of-course exam in geometry. (A science test will be developed in the future.) School system results are reported for all students as a group and for the following subgroups: African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, White, and those receiving special services (free and reduced price meals, Limited English Proficient, and special education).

School systems that meet the targets for all students and subgroups are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). School systems that do not meet the targets for all students and subgroups are not making AYP and may be identified for School Improvement or Corrective Action.

What are the criteria for identifying school systems?

Maryland's School Improvement Program holds school systems, as well as schools, accountable for progress toward a standard, not progress against themselves. It is possible for a school system to be identified for improvement even if none of its schools is identified.

The school and the school system are only accountable for student performance when the student has been enrolled in the respective school or school system from September 30 through the dates of testing. Students who move from one school to another in the same school system count for the school system's AYP and not the school's.

School systems are identified as follows:

- **FOR SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT** -- The school system has not made AYP for two consecutive years.
- **FOR CORRECTIVE ACTION** -- The school system has not made AYP for two years *after* being identified for System Improvement.

Will parents be notified?

Parents of students enrolled in the schools in the identified school system will receive notification. The notification will include the reasons the school system was identified and how parents can participate in improving the school system.

What is required when a school system is identified for School Improvement?

The school system identified for System Improvement must revise the system's Master Plan to include actions the school system will take to improve the academic performance of students. The system must also notify parents of their school system improvement status. The Maryland State Department of Education will provide technical assistance to the school system. If the school system does not make AYP for two consecutive years after being identified for school system improvement, the school system moves to Corrective Action.

What is required when a school system is identified for Corrective Action?

If a school system does not make AYP for two consecutive years after being identified for school system improvement, the school system is identified for Corrective Action by the state. The state must then do at least one of the following:

- Defer, reduce, or redirect state funds
 - Order the school system to fully implement a new curriculum aligned with the Voluntary State Curriculum
 - Order the school system to replace school principals and executive officers related to the system's failure to make AYP
 - Remove schools from local school board control
 - Order a reorganization that groups specified schools under an executive officer approved by the state, or
 - Abolish or restructure the school system. This requires legislative authorization.
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How can a school system exit System Improvement or Corrective Action status?

If a school system makes AYP for two consecutive years beginning after the date it was identified for system improvement or corrective action, the school system will exit system improvement or corrective action for the succeeding year.
